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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SMIG](#) [KTIP](#) [KCRM](#) [KWNM](#) [CH](#) [VM](#)
SUBJECT: CHINA: ANTI-TRAFFICKING COOPERATION WITH VIETNAM
GOOD BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

Classified By: Deputy Political Section Chief Ben Moeling. Reasons 1.4
(B) and (D).

Summary

11. (C) Anti-trafficking cooperation between China and Vietnam in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (Guangxi) is increasingly effective, although trafficking of Vietnamese women and children remains a major problem. More than 200 trafficking victims have been rescued since 2004, but despite efforts by both governments, the Vietnamese Consulate in Nanning maintains that cases handled to date represent the "tip of the iceberg." New trends indicate that Vietnamese men are being trafficking for forced labor into China, although the Chinese authorities are reluctant to engage with Vietnam on this issue. Guangxi's Civil Affairs Department Deputy Director believes human trafficking is "a declining issue" and claims that the need for trafficking will disappear if programs addressing poverty and economic development continue to bear fruit. End Summary.

Cooperation Increasingly Effective

12. (U) Anti-trafficking cooperation between China and Vietnam in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (Guangxi) is increasingly effective, especially since 2006 when cooperation through liaison offices along the border improved, said Vietnamese Consul Pham Thanh Binh in a meeting with PolOff and ConGenOff January 15. According to Binh, law enforcement officers on both sides of the border meet monthly to discuss joint anti-trafficking measures, as well as other programs to combat cross-border crime. According to the China Law Association, more than 200 Vietnamese women and children trafficked to China have been helped since 2004 through bilateral cooperation on this issue.

Cross-Border Issues a Priority

13. (U) Although established temporarily, Binh maintained that, because of their effectiveness, the liaison offices along the border in Guangxi should be made permanent to allow for a longer-term focus on anti-trafficking measures. He added that the overall structure of Sino-Vietnamese cooperation on transnational issues was currently being discussed and that trafficking was an important element of those discussions. Recent high-level bilateral meetings confirm that cross-border issues are a priority for both countries. According to media reports, China's Minister of Public Security (MPS) Meng Jianzhu's trip to Vietnam in December 2008 focused primarily on enhancing joint efforts to combat transnational crime, which he discussed with his Vietnamese counterpart during his visit.

Consulate Heavily Involved

¶4. (SBU) Binh noted that although most trafficking cases in Guangxi were handled by the liaison offices, the Consulate was still involved in helping some Vietnamese trafficking victims return home. He pointed out that since the beginning of 2009 he had already been alerted to nine new cases. According to Binh, the typical scenario starts with a young Vietnamese woman being duped by a friend or boyfriend into traveling to the border area, usually for work. She is then forced into a trafficking network that brings her to China, most often for prostitution. Binh said that the Consulate receives word of a victim's plight from family members, friends in similar situations who managed to escape, or sometimes even from victims themselves, at which point the Consulate works with the Guangxi Public Security Bureau (PSB) to locate and rescue the victims.

¶5. (SBU) If a trafficking victim is rescued, the Vietnamese Consulate works to facilitate the paperwork and administrative procedures necessary to return home, Binh said, and sometimes even drives the individual to the border to ensure safe transfer to Vietnamese police at the other end. Binh stressed that, contrary to a decade ago when many older Vietnamese women were attracted to Southern China for employment or marriage, most Vietnamese women in China today are in their teens, are in China against their will, and are desperate to return home.

Trafficking Still a Major Problem

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¶6. (C) The cases handled by the Consulate and the liaison offices are the "tip of the iceberg," maintained Binh, who claimed that trafficking continued to be a major problem in the region. He added that in 2008, his Consulate noted a new trend in which Vietnamese men were being trafficked into China for forced labor. Although there is clear evidence to prove that this practice was occurring, Binh (strictly protect) admitted that his Consulate had had no success in engaging with its Chinese counterparts on the issue.

Cooperation with NGOs

¶7. (U) Apart from law enforcement efforts to combat trafficking, the Chinese government cooperates with international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to implement anti-trafficking programs in Guangxi. Save the Children UK (STCUK), in cooperation with the Guangxi Women's Federation, has established several programs in three key cities to protect vulnerable in-country and cross-border migrant children from exploitation, especially trafficking. The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) are both cooperating with the MPS on establishing additional centers in the border region to assist in protection and rehabilitation of trafficking victims.

Trafficking a "Declining Issue"?

¶8. (C) At least one Chinese government official willing to discuss the issue suggested that trafficking was no longer a major problem in the region. Guangxi Department of Civil Affairs Deputy Director Yang Guoyi, in a separate meeting with PolOff and ConGenOff on January 15, declared trafficking to be "a declining issue," thanks to increased efforts by law enforcement to crack down on those involved. In addition, Yang maintained that services aimed at poverty alleviation among impoverished rural and migrant workers provided by the Department of Civil Affairs in cooperation with international NGOs such as World Vision supported anti-trafficking policies

by eliminating its root causes, namely poverty and economic stagnation.

19. (U) This is a joint Embassy Beijing-ConGen Guangzhou cable. Embassy Hanoi also cleared this cable.
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